

Maine H1N1 Influenza (“Swine Flu”) Update

Summary of Information and Activities for Saturday, May 23, 2009, 4 PM

No new cases

Flu info on the Internet: <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/boh/swine-flu-2009.shtml>

- **Maine Data:** **9 confirmed cases.** US CDC has ruled out 5 probable Maine H1N1 cases.
- **National Data:** US CDC reports 6,552 confirmed and probable cases and 9 deaths (<http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/investigation.htm>).
- **International Data:** WHO reports 11,168 cases in 42 countries (<http://www.who.int/csr/don/en/>).

Recent Activity:

Case finding:

- There are nine confirmed cases in Maine: three adults and one youth in York County, two adults and two youths in Cumberland County, and one youth in Penobscot County. All cases are recovering or have recovered.
- US CDC used advanced laboratory testing to rule out two probable Maine H1N1 cases, determining that they are cases of seasonal flu. Both cases were an uncommon type of seasonal influenza for testing purposes. The Maine CDC public health laboratory has received new equipment and will soon have the ability to do confirmatory H1N1 testing, eliminating the need to submit specimens to US CDC and speeding the testing process.
- As the infection spreads and re-circulates, the numbers of cases and specific locations become less meaningful. There clearly are other people with H1N1 in Maine who have not yet been identified. The nine cases described above simply indicate the presence of H1N1 in Maine.
- There appears to be a high spread among children and young adults.

Key messages:

- H1N1 poses the threat of being at least as serious as seasonal flu. As the infection spreads we expect to see some increase in severity, as has been seen nationally. In addition, because this is a new virus, most people do not have natural immunity to it and no vaccine is yet available.
- We all need to stay informed, be prepared, and practice proper respiratory hygiene, including the following steps:
 - Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or sleeve.
 - Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hands cleaners are also effective.
 - Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
 - If you get sick, stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to avoid infecting them.
- Because recommendations from U.S. CDC are updated frequently, we urge clinicians, school officials, and others to review the most updated guidance before making clinical or closure decisions. US CDC guidance and recommendations can be accessed at this site: <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance/>.

General Information

- In addition to the information published on our website, those wanting general information about H1N1 may call our toll-free information line at (888) 257-0990; NexTalk (deaf/hard of hearing): (207) 629-5751. The line operates weekdays from 9am to 5pm.

If you have comments, questions or feedback about this Update, please contact us at (207) 287-6372.